

Washington, DC -- On Wednesday, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-7), a former 3-Star Admiral, released the following statement in anticipation of President Bush's proposal to put more troops in Iraq.

"We are on the road to nowhere in Iraq, and putting more troops on that road will not get us anywhere. If these troops were needed for the safety and security of our men and women already in Iraq, then I would support the increase - but they are not.

Putting troops in Iraq violates exactly what we should not be doing:

1) Increasing the dependence of the Iraqis on us, politically and militarily, at a time when they should be shouldering increased responsibility for their country.

2) It also goes against the evidence that increasing troops in Baghdad will not work - which we have already done since August. That increase has done nothing to help curtail the violence there, primarily because the resolution to this civil war is dependent upon the political decisions that need to be made by various Iraqi leaders to cease the sectarian violence.

3) Finally, putting more troops in Iraq hurts our overall security further. With an army at home that is nearly broken, this additional strain will further hurt our readiness, and further divert the attention and resources that we need to focus elsewhere on our global security concerns from North Korea to Iran, Afghanistan, the Western Pacific, and the Middle East.

The bottom-line is that the way forward is not to add more troops, but to set a deliberate timetable for re-deployment from Iraq - at least by the end of this year - to serve as a catalyst for the Iraqis to accept responsibility for their country, so we can better address our other strategic security interests throughout the world, as well as here at home.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's*

*anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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